
FOOD BANK ACTION PLAN

Guided by the Jewish tradition of repairing the world, the JFS *Polack Food Bank* is a community supported food bank that serves food insecure households in four Capitol Hill and Downtown zip codes (98122, 98121, 98112 and 98101) as well as members of the Jewish community. Volunteers, donors and community supporters are key to the success of the *Polack Food Bank*.

Hungry or food insecure households often have little choice in what they eat as they are subject to the donation stream of the emergency food system. Poor diet is directly related to multiple negative health outcomes such as diabetes and obesity. These negative health outcomes have a disproportionate impact on low income communities, like those served by the JFS *Polack Food Bank*. Food banks are only a small piece of the food environment, but they are a critical piece for some of our most vulnerable community members. To improve the health of our community and to help end hunger, the JFS *Polack Food Bank* is committed to working towards food justice for all in our community.

The JFS *Polack Food Bank*, in alignment with the City of Seattle Food Action Plan, strives to meet four goals:

- 1. Healthy Food for All**
- 2. Grow Local**
- 3. Strengthen the Local Economy**
- 4. Prevent Food Waste**

GOAL 1. HEALTHY FOOD FOR ALL

All people should have access to sufficient quantities of healthy food (as defined by the Seattle Food Action Plan: Healthy food is “food that is fresh and nutritious and grown without harming its producers or our air, water, or soil”). The JFS *Polack Food Bank* works to promote healthy eating by meeting the following goals:

- All *Polack Food Bank* clients have access to at least 10 servings of fresh produce at each visit.
- Food is culturally relevant to clients (multiple immigrant groups access the JFS *Polack Food Bank*, including people from Russia, Ukraine, China and Viet Nam).
- Delivery of groceries to disabled or homebound clients is efficient and works with other local food banks to maximize impact.
- Clients have access to cooking, nutrition, budgeting information and classes to maximize the food and resources available to them.
- Increase access to SNAP (food stamps) and other resources so clients can leverage all available resources to meet their dietary needs.
- Promote SNAP and Fresh Bucks (a program that doubles SNAP purchasing power) at local farmers markets to increase access to local fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Provide a monthly Kosher Food Bank to meet the needs of the observant Jewish community.

GOAL 2. GROW LOCAL

Locally grown and purchased food has a lower environmental impact than food that is shipped many thousands of miles. Buying locally also supports the local economy. Whenever possible the JFS *Polack Food Bank* strives to provide locally grown food and to reach out to community members to engage them in the work of ending hunger at home in their own gardens. To meet the goal of making locally grown food accessible to clients, JFS *Polack Food Bank* undertakes the following programs:

- Glean the Broadway Farmers Market bimonthly through the growing season to increase access to varied, local and fresh produce.
- Coordinate outreach to local P-Patches to increase growing for and giving to the JFS *Polack Food Bank*.
- Spring Seedling Project – invite families to JFS to plant seeds to take home and grow on JFS's behalf.
- Reach out to local support networks to increase the number of home gardeners growing produce for the *Polack Food Bank*.
- Coordinate gleaning projects for volunteers at local farms.
- Explore the potential of coordinating growing efforts with partner organizations (such as the Jewish Day School and J- Connect).

GOAL 3. STRENGTHEN THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Food bank use is directly linked to the state of the local economy; when jobs are scarce, the need for emergency food increases. Many local companies and non-profits support and partner with the JFS *Polack Food Bank* to help provide emergency food. JFS is committed to using its purchasing power to efficiently provide emergency food and to strengthen the local economy. To decrease need for emergency food, the JFS *Polack Food Bank* works to strengthen the local economy by meeting the following goals:

- Purchase locally grown or produced food whenever possible.
- Explore future partnerships with small non-profit farms for farm-to-food bank distribution.
- Support local partnerships through social media and public acknowledgment of the relationship.
- Promote farmers market use through Fresh Bucks promotion and Harvest Voucher programs.

GOAL 4. PREVENT FOOD WASTE

The JFS *Polack Food Bank* is committed to reducing the environmental impact of food bank operations. To meet this goal the JFS *Polack Food Bank* will:

- Distribute close-to-date food as allowed by Food Lifeline's distribution guidelines.
- Glean produce from Broadway Farmers Market that would otherwise enter the waste system.
- Compost unusable food whenever possible.
- Coordinate with emergency food network to share resources and avoid waste.